

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
PUBLIC WORKSHOP
JACKSON, CA
MARCH 28, 2007

PROGRAM GUIDELINES
QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 8, "Reduce Risk of Natural Disasters, such as Wildfire": This program area, fire reduction, seems spot on to lookout towers.**
2. Regarding Program Guidelines, page 12, "Available Tools, Methods, and Resources": Local governments are still working on collaborative approaches and meaningful public processes, and need assistance. Presentations to local governments and organizations would be good.
3. Concerned about retaining control of an historic building if receiving a SNC grant. What does controlling interest language regarding project/land mean? **SNC Note: The term "controlling interest" does not appear in either the Draft Program Guidelines or the Draft Grant Guidelines.**
4. There is a push at the top for integrated planning. Will SNC try to actively bring together different players (e.g. groups with similar proposals)?
5. The Program Guidelines provide good potential for cross-cutting programs. Education is important. **What about seed money for a string of Sierra information centers? They could provide information on hunting, fishing, evening seminars, water monitoring, public trails etc.**
6. I'm with the Central Sierra Resource Conservation District (RCD). Several goals tie into working with agencies in different counties, could a project involve multiple agencies and/or counties? For example: Invasive weed control projects would want to target multiple locations.
7. **Please give a definition of a working landscape.**

GRANT GUIDELINES
QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. Can staffing positions be funded?
2. **Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 3, "Eligible Costs": Non-eligible costs include Information Technology (IT). Many groups use a web presence to provide information and raise funds. How about funding a web presence specific to a project that explains the project or solicits funding, is that eligible?**
3. How about funding for a region-wide IT project to develop the web presence organizations need to help get additional funding?
4. Could there be funding for fuels reduction mission-specific items (such as a fire tower or staffing for fire operations) under Prop. 84?

5. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 7, "Cooperation and Community Support": Do agencies have to participate? For example, if there is strong project support otherwise, but the water agency is hesitant to sponsor the project, how does that work?
6. How about developing urgency guidelines? What about the deterioration of buildings?
7. How about a project concept period for the funding cycle? Would SNC consider this?
8. Regarding programs with proven watershed benefits, would that be evaluated for fire reduction projects (e.g. treatment of acreage through watershed programs)? Might this be an evaluation criterion? Maybe this relates to project cost effectiveness.
9. **How do subregional boundaries fit with cross-jurisdictional watersheds and rivers? How does this issue relate to the Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs)?**
10. **If someone applies for a grant this year but it is not funded, would a new application need to be submitted? How about a letter to keep the project alive, rather than a whole new application?**
11. Using the example of an environmental restoration project on private land, would SNC consider cooperating with a local school for long-term maintenance and monitoring?
12. With limited funding how do you prioritize the call on money? What ends up at the top, what ends up at the bottom, and how?
13. **Would it be possible to apply for grants in more than one subregion? (Cross-jurisdictional watersheds for example).**
14. The Grant Guidelines emphasize "protection and restoration." A number of watersheds are already prioritized for planning assessments rather than any project implementation. Is that planning assessment eligible for funding? How about doing contamination source identification (non-point, e.coli)?
15. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 1, "Introduction" and Workshop Workbook, question 6: Where did the minimum award come from (\$50,000)?
16. In regards to "vested interest," a lot of projects are on private land. **Owners may not want easements, but may be open to agricultural best management practices, etc. The Coastal Conservancy has used long-term management agreements that run with the land. Is this an option? SNC may want to look at the Coastal Conservancy documents. "Vested interest" makes a lot of landowners nervous. (SNC Note: The term "vest" only appears in these draft documents in the context of the grantee's violation of the grant through breach of a material term or condition thereof. Please refer to the Program Guidelines, page 14, "Reversion" and the Grant Guidelines, page 5, "Requirements.")**

17. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 9, "Cost Effectiveness": As an example of "Cost Effectiveness," fuel reduction requires throwing money in initially, versus the need to pay off large insurance claims later.
18. **If an application is not complete, the Program Guidelines on page 16 discuss SNC staff working with applicants. Will SNC do that for Prop. 84 funds?** This will be a lot of work. This is a more interactive process than the typical grants program.
19. **How would SNC handle repeatable projects in weed control, county to county? These are the same problems, same purpose. Pulling in funds to use in multiple geographical areas would streamline projects.**
20. **In SOGs, eligible projects are confusing. Projects prior to acquisition could be funded but acquisition projects could not be?** Usually it is necessary to move quickly on acquisitions rather than planning. **It would be good to include acquisitions in SOGs.**
21. **Are funds available for local land use plans, such as community plans? Community planning addresses all program areas. Can non-profits apply for funds for community planning, or does the community have to do that?** Valley Springs in Calaveras County, for example, has a thirty-year old community plan and the county says there is no funding to update it.
22. **What does SNC envision in regard to fuel reduction and fire safe activities? Does biomass utilization fit in?**
23. Would hate to see SNC's Board have to vote on every single project, that involves more politics.

OTHER QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. What is a vested interest?
2. What about a long-term management agreement that is recorded and associated with land title? Is that a "vested interest" (e.g. Coastal Conservancy model)?
3. If SNC gives grants for historic restoration of a district-owned building, would SNC then have a vested interest in the building?
4. There seems to be a focus on "encouraging and supporting" existing efforts. What about visions for new projects that would involve multiple agencies and partners?
5. Would the board vote on projects as a slate or on an individual basis?
6. Differentiate between a water agency and water district.
7. Regarding SNC trying to establish the need for additional funding: will those be State and Federal funds? How about other sources?
8. Is SNC looking for capital investment for for-profit projects that might result from incubator or demonstration projects? Could SNC invest in a non-profit incubator that is trying to develop a business model for for-profit businesses? (Commenter is working with investment bankers who

- are looking for “green” projects that generate profit.) How do we tell stories of local enterprises and working landscapes so that they can draw in outside investment sources? Don’t see any thing about that.
9. Have an idea of developing a community board on SNC’s web site, where people can post questions and get answers back immediately.
 10. I’m with the Sierra Nevada Logging Museum in Arnold. We are all volunteers, in a new building, open eight months out of the year, and have a Shay locomotive. One of our projects is to get that Shay running, have a one and one-half mile track, and have a 1935-era logging camp for people to enjoy. Also, there are tons of recreational opportunities nearby. We want to complete our library too. Would SNC stand behind that type of cost? We have had trouble with grants due to being located on Calaveras County Water District land (private) with only a five-year lease. The logging museum is one mile from Highway 4, a scenic byway. It seems natural to connect with that.
 11. What about having an IT person on the SNC team?
 12. Where do we get an application? SNC needs comments by April 16th?
 13. Did you mention when SNC anticipates accepting Competitive Grant applications? SOG applications?

SUBREGIONAL ISSUES RAISED

1. Invasive weed removal
2. Fuel reduction
3. Watershed planning/water quality
4. Historic restoration
5. Recreation/tourism
6. Community planning
7. Information technology
8. Regional economy